

**Derrylyn Gorski
First Selectman
Town of Bethany
Public Hearing Testimony
Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee
March 9, 2015**

RE: SB-946- AN ACT CONCERNING REVENUE ITEMS TO IMPLEMENT THE GOVERNOR'S BUDGET

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of retaining the Resident Trooper Program at its current funding formula. Others have and will speak of the benefits of this program to the small towns; I wish to speak about the benefits of this program to the Connecticut State Police and the potential loss of revenue to the State were the formula to be changed to 100%.

Most are aware of what the towns get for 70% of the cost of the Resident Trooper, so the question is, what does the State of CT get for their 30%?

Last year in Bethany there were 5,718 calls for service, if Bethany withdraws from the program, the Connecticut State Police would lose \$130,000, but would still have to respond to those 5,718 calls.

Our Resident Trooper acts as the Student Resource Officer in the Elementary and Middle School in Bethany, about half of those calls for service are not included in those statistics because he is there or the schools call him directly. The Troop would have to cover those calls were we to withdraw.

Our Resident Trooper investigates all levels of crime in Bethany, if Bethany were no longer a Resident Trooper town, those crimes would be investigated by the Major Crimes Unit of the CSP.

When Major Crimes does come into Bethany to investigate a crime, our Resident Trooper is an excellent resource to their investigation because he knows the community and the residents-the best of Community Policing. Without a Resident Trooper, they would be starting their investigation at square one.

The CSP pulls our Resident Trooper from Bethany whenever they need him. For example, Bethany's Resident Trooper spent 30 days in Newtown after the tragic school shooting. We were not compensated in any way even though Bethany was only covered by the regular local patrol for those 30 days. If we were to stay in the program at 100%, would the CSP have to ask my permission to re-deploy our RT elsewhere? We would be paying 100% of the cost, we should have 100% control.

Of the 56 resident trooper towns, 22 have multiple resident troopers. Those towns may not withdraw from the program completely, but they are very likely to reduce the number of troopers and increase the number of constable/police officers they have, following the Ledyard model. Ledyard has one Sargent for its Resident Trooper and 19 full-time Constables. It is not unreasonable that, of the 107 resident troopers, 30 may be withdrawn. The cost of our Resident Trooper at 70% for FY 16 will be \$130,000. Losing 30 Resident Troopers at \$130,000 each is a loss in revenue to the state of \$3.9M.

The Resident Troopers are included in the CSP's calculations for minimum staffing requirements; would a reduction in Resident Troopers mean a reduction in the staffing of the CSP? Probably not.

This is a valuable program to the towns. I believe its value as a source of funding to the CSP should also be recognized.